

What is claimed is:

1. A fish stringer for retaining fish which are caught while fishing, the stringer comprising:

a cord-like member having an insertion end and a retaining end;

5 a rigid insertion member coupled to the insertion end of the cord-like member to facilitate passing the insertion end of the cord-like member through a body of a retained fish;

a retaining member coupled to the retaining end of the cord-like member; and

10 the retaining member having sufficient size to prevent the retained fish, when strung onto the cord-like member, from falling off of the retaining end of the cord-like member; and

the retaining member having the approximate shape and size of a fish and being suspended from the retaining end of the cord-like member in a substantially upright position in a natural orientation of a fish;

15 whereby the retained fish will be kept underwater, and fish swimming in proximity to the stringer will not be spooked away by the retaining member.

2. The stringer of claim 1 wherein the retaining member has sufficient integral weight to pull the retaining end of the cord-like member under water and to keep the retained fish under water.

20 3. The stringer of claim 1 wherein the retaining member comprises a coupling portion configured for attachment to the retaining end of the cord-like member.

4. The stringer of claim 3 wherein the coupling portion comprises an aperture defined by a portion of the retaining member.

25 5. A stringer for retaining a fish that has been caught while fishing, the stringer comprising:

a flexible cord-like member having a first end and a second end;

an insertion tool operatively connected to the first end of the cord-like member, the insertion tool being configured to pass through the body of a retained fish; and

30 a retaining member being operatively connected to the second end of the cord-like member, the retaining member having sufficient size to prevent a fish that has been

threaded onto the cord-like member from passing beyond the retaining member, the retaining member having sufficient weight to hold the retained fish underwater, the retaining member being arranged and configured to blend in with surroundings in which it is placed;

5           whereby the retained fish will be kept underwater, and free-swimming fish will accept the retaining member as a part of the natural surroundings so that the stringer may be used in proximity to a fishing lure without driving fish away.

6.       The stringer of claim 5, wherein the retaining member is in the shape of an animal.

10       7.       The stringer of claim 5, wherein the retaining member is in the shape of a fish.

8.       The stringer of claim 5, wherein the retaining member has sufficient integral weight to hold the retained fish under water.

9.       The stringer of claim 1, wherein the retaining member has a substantially non-reflective surface.

15       10.      A retaining member for use with a stringer of the type used to secure fish that have been caught, the retaining member comprising:

          a body in the general configuration of a fish body having a mouth and a tail, the body being configured to be operatively connected to a stringer such that the body is suspended from the stringer and hangs in a natural orientation of a fish;

20           whereby fish will accept the retaining member as a part of the natural surroundings and the stringer may be used in proximity to a fishing lure without driving fish away.

11.      The retaining member of claim 10 wherein the retaining member has sufficient integral weight to keep fish retained on the stringer under water.

25       12.      The retaining member of claim 10 comprising a coupling portion configured for attachment to a stringer.

13.      The retaining member of claim 12 wherein the coupling portion comprises an aperture defined by a portion of the retaining member.

30       14.      The stringer of claim 13, wherein the retaining member has a substantially non-reflective surface.